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01x04 - Ted's Not Dead

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01x04 - Ted's Not Dead

by **bunniefuu**

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FADE IN: INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

Pan across various dishes at the counter then over to a booth. Brian on the left, Michael and Emmett on the right. They're eating breakfast, subdued.

MICHAEL [VO]

In case you weren't there, I gotta tell ya, last Saturday night at Babylon was ... to die for.

EMMETT [OS]

Would somebody please say something?

MICHAEL

Okay. So it's late, and I'm leaving Babylon and there's this really hot guy.

FLASH CUT: INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

Dancing go-go boys. Michael appears in the crowd. A second later, HOT GUY comes up from behind and starts talking. Michael turns his head toward him and grins.

MICHAEL [VO]

And he's, like, perfect.

FLASH CUT: INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

BRIAN

How perfect?

MICHAEL

Perfect. And we end up ... [takes a bite of eggs] at my place.

FLASH CUT: INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Standing in the living room, Michael is kissing Hot Guy's neck.

HOT GUY

So I work with emotionally disturbed kids, and I really love it. And I'm the captain of the g*y water polo team.

MICHAEL

You're really well-rounded.

He squeezes Hot Guy's a*s.

FLASH CUT: INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

MICHAEL

So, we're making out, and in my mind I'm picturing him in a Speedo with a flag on it.

FLASH CUT: INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

HOT GUY

Oh, say, have you ever been to Brazil?

MICHAEL

Um, n-no. Have you?

He unbuckles Hot Guy's belt/pants.

HOT GUY

I just came back. It's fabulous.

Michael whips his own shirt off over his head.

MICHAEL

Great beaches, I hear.

He goes to his knees.

HOT GUY

Yeah. Only, they have these things.

MICHAEL

Things?

HOT GUY

Parasite things. They live in the sand and they sort of ... burrow themselves right up in there.

Michael quickly stands, freaked.

MICHAEL [VO]

He had them.

FLASH CUT: INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

MICHAEL

Brazilian beach parasites, in his a*s.

Emmett laughs.

EMMETT

Oh, god. Well, at least you found out before you got too far.

Michael shudders.

BRIAN

[to Emmett] What about you?

EMMETT

We were just getting started.

FLASH CUT: INT. WEIRD GUY'S BEDROOM

We follow the camera across a blood red bedroom filled with a hundred lit candles, a leather/metal-clad torso dummy, whips on the wall, white bed and a chain headboard. A bald man in leathers and spiked metal collar, WEIRD GUY, is fitting Emmett into a leather body harness.

EMMETT

I feel like a 1991 Madonna video. Uh, do you have this in a size larger?

Weird Guy cinches the back of the harness hard, rocking Emmett.

WEIRD GUY

Can we hurry this along? I've got a bride and groom to do in the morning.

EMMETT

So you're bi?

WEIRD GUY

No. They're dead. Car crash.

He pushes Emmett onto the bed and grabs his legs in the air.

FLASH CUT: INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

MICHAEL

You went home with...

EMMETT

An undertaker. Mm-hmm.

BRIAN

I f*cked an undertaker once.

MICHAEL

You did? When?

BRIAN

He told me sometimes they sew the mouths shut.

EMMETT

What about you, Brian? What'd you do?

Long pause.

FLASH CUT: INT. LOFT - NIGHT

A nude Justin sits on the bed, watching an equally nude Brian walk toward him. Brian drops onto his knees on the bed and they kiss.

FLASH CUT: INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

BRIAN

I made it an early evening.

EMMETT

You know, um, when I go ... promise you won't let them sew my mouth shut. Because when I get to heaven, and I meet Natalie Wood, I wanna be able to say, 'Natalie, it's Emmett. What happened that night?!'

They all laugh.

DEB [OS]

Hey!

She's standing at the table with a serious face, serving tray in hand.

DEB

Shouldn't you boys be getting to the hospital?

She walks away. Their smiles fade.

CUT TO: INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Ted, in a bed and on oxygen, looks asleep.

MICHAEL [OS]

Schmidt, Ted.

NURSE [OS]

Are you family?

INT. NURSE'S STATION

Brian, Emmett and Michael stand at the desk.

MICHAEL

Friends. Uh, we know he's, like, in a coma and everything. We just would like to be with him for a little while, if that's okay.

NURSE

I'll see.

She walks away.

EMMETT

The nurse's station. I used to think it had something to do with radio. 'All nursing, all the time.'

They chuckle.

MRS. SCHMIDT [OS]

Hello.

We pan to the right and see a nicely dressed woman, MRS. SCHMIDT, sitting along the row of chairs against the wall.

MRS. SCHMIDT

I'm Margaret Schmidt. I'm Ted's mother.

They look at her. Michael walks over.

MRS. SCHMIDT

If you need permission to see him, I'll give it. I've ... I'm sure he'd appreciate it.

MICHAEL

I'm Michael. And this is Emmett [gestures] and Brian [gestures]. We're Ted's friends.

MRS. SCHMIDT

He's still in the coma. He looks like he did when he was a boy. When he slept. They don't think he'll come out of it.

Emmett looks back at Brian. Michael sits by Mrs. Schmidt.

MRS. SCHMIDT

I sat by his bed ... all night. About five o'clock in the morning it occurred to me ... loving someone's not the same as knowing them.

Brian looks away. And spots a hot MALE NURSE in the room behind the nurse's station. As the sound of orgasmic moans start in the background, Brian watches him walk by and Male Nurse smiles, interested. Michael sees the exchange.

MICHAEL

Brian!

Brian turns back around to see them all staring at him. He looks away, chastised.

CUT TO: INT. JUSTIN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bedside table clock reads 8:09 a.m. Bare chested, Justin is sleeping face down under the comforter.

JENNIFER [OS]

Justin?

Knock on the door.

JENNIFER [OS]

Justin, you're late.

Justin lifts his head a little and 'hmphs' as he wakes up. Jennifer walks in.

JUSTIN [OS]

You're right.

Tossing the comforter, he rolls over and up.

JUSTIN

I'm up, I'm up.

JENNIFER

You got ten minutes.

She starts making his bed.

JUSTIN

I'm taking a shower, okay?

He walks off-screen. The sound of running water. Jennifer spots his open backpack on the bed. After a glance at the bathroom, she pulls out Justin's sketchpad. Another glance the bathroom's way and she opens the pad. Inside are drawings of a football player (#68 - Chris Hobbs).

First page: the football player a) talking to a figure b) holding a male figure in his arms. Second page: close-ups of the football player's face. Third page is blank. Fourth/fifth page: more of the football player in uniform, full body. Sixth page is men: chests, abs, asses. Seventh page is covered with Brian's name.

Jennifer puts the sketchpad back. She stands still, closing her eyes. Justin's voice startles her.

JUSTIN [OS]

I'm out of shampoo.

JENNIFER

I'll get you some.

She leaves. The clock reads 8:10 a.m.

CUT TO: INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Emmett, Brian and Michael looking into Ted's room from the door window. Inside, Male Nurse is tending to Ted. Lifting the bed rail, he sees them and walks over to slide shut the curtain.

EMMETT

Who do you think it was? I mean, who, uh, gave him the drugs.

MICHAEL

I bet it was that guy Blake who was cruising him all night.

EMMETT

Think we should tell someone?

BRIAN

No.

Long beat.

MICHAEL

His mom said she'd call us if there was any change.

BRIAN

You know, he's a first. The first almost dead guy I sort of had sex with.

MICHAEL

You had sex with Ted?

EMMETT

You never had sex with Ted.

MICHAEL

When did you have sex with T--

BRIAN

Sort of sex. At this semi-orgy.

MICHAEL

Semi? When?

BRIAN

You know that weekend that John-John's plane went down?

EMMETT

Oh ... god. They kept showing him on the beach with his shirt off. I didn't know whether to jerk off or weep.

MICHAEL

So did-so did you, like, plan it?

BRIAN

It just sort of happened. Things do.

Emmett laughs.

BRIAN

It was Scott and Kevin, the Todds.

Emmett holds up his pinkie finger.

BRIAN

And Ted shows up with my taxes, and all the sudden we're all doing it and ... he even tried to f*ck me.

MICHAEL

He's in there. His life's like this [gestures up and down], dot on a screen. And that could be us.

BRIAN

No, it could not be us. Because we know better. We know not to believe pretty little blond boys who tell you it's 'really good sh*t.' Because that's what they all say. Ted didn't know that. And he didn't know that you only do drugs with your friends because they're the only ones who give a f*ck about you.

He puts a hand on each of their shoulders.

BRIAN

Now I've got to go to work. I have to be brilliant.

CUT TO: INT. ST. JAMES ACADEMY - DAY

Middle-aged teacher, MR. HORNER, stands at the blackboard where a large black and white photo of a man hangs.

MR. HORNER

F. Scott Fitzgerald. Classic profile, famously handsome.

He gestures with a book he's holding.

MR. HORNER

And The Great Gatsby.

He sits on the edge of his desk. View of the classroom and we see Justin, chin down, at his desk in the back. Chris Hobbs sits one aisle over to the right.

MR. HORNER [OS]

Which captures a particular American yearning.

Shot of Chris that pans down to the back of a male figure Justin is drawing in his sketchpad.

MR. HORNER

And what do I mean by that, hmm?

Daphne, at Justin's left and seeing the drawing, giggles. Justin grins in reaction but doesn't look up.

MR. HORNER

Justin?

Justin looks up, startled. The class turns to look at him. Close-up on Chris.

JUSTIN [OS]

Uh, yearning is when you want something really badly.

Back to Justin.

JUSTIN

Like ... so bad it hurts.

Chris looks from Justin back to Mr. Horner.

MR. HORNER

Exactly. It needs to hurt to be worthy of the word.

Back to Chris.

MR. HORNER [OS]

Otherwise, it's just wanting.

Justin drawing.

MR. HORNER [OS]

It's represented in The Gatsby by the green light across the water.

Close-up of Justin's eyes as he stares at Chris.

MR. HORNER [OS]

You can see it, but you can't touch it.

Chris friend-punches the arm of the guy in front of him. They trade punches.

MR. HORNER [OS]

Mr. Hobbs!

Tossing the book down, he walks over.

MR. HORNER

Mr. Hobbs, are your parents really paying for you to have another testosterone outburst?

CHRIS

I wasn't doing anything.

MR. HORNER

Exactly. But you will be after school.

CHRIS

I have football practice.

Justin is listening intently.

MR. HORNER

Not today. Today you'll be cleaning out the athletic room. The only thing we fight about in this room, Mr. Hobbs ... is interpretation.

CUT TO: INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Michael and Emmett walk up to Mrs. Schmidt. She's sitting, reading a magazine.

MICHAEL

Mrs. Schmidt, we're going to work. I-if you want, you can call me on my cell phone if...

MRS. SCHMIDT

They said ... he took an overdose of a-a drug I've never heard of.

EMMETT

Well, h-he wasn't a-a drug user.

MICHAEL

He must have met someone that night. And-and took him home.

MRS. SCHMIDT

May I ask you something, Michael?

MICHAEL

Sure.

Mrs. Schmidt stands.

MRS. SCHMIDT

If my son had been ... straight, if he had taken a woman home, do you think she would have run off and left him there to die?

She grabs her purse and leaves.

CUT TO: INT. ST. JAMES ACADEMY - DAY

Chris is cleaning the equipment room. We pull back and see Justin standing there, watching.

JUSTIN

Need some help?

Chris turns.

CHRIS

This sucks.

JUSTIN

Yeah. They need you at practice.

He walks further in the room.

CHRIS

How do you know they do? I thought you weren't into, like, sports and sh*t.

JUSTIN

Some.

CHRIS

Yeah, well, you sure keep it a secret. I'm supposed to get all this sh*t cleaned up outta here.

Justin picks up a box of equipment and sets it on the table.

CHRIS

Wow, you're pretty strong.

JUSTIN

It's my other secret.

He grins.

CUT TO: INT. RYDER ADVERTISING - DAY

Brian at his desk, looking at some copy. He tosses it on the desk.

BRIAN

I can't do this f*cking copy.

MELANIE [OS]

Excuse me for barging in.

She strides in and slams her briefcase down on Brian's desk.

MELANIE

This won't take long. As you may or may not know, I'm Ted's lawyer.

BRIAN

So?

MELANIE

So, you need to know Ted made a living will. Do you have one?

BRIAN

No.

MELANIE

Well, you should.

She holds out some papers from a folder for him to take.

MELANIE

But, I'm not your lawyer, I'm his.

When Brian doesn't take the papers, she drops them on his desk.

MELANIE

Anyway, he's made you responsible.

BRIAN

For what?

MELANIE

For deciding should he ever be incompetent or unable to make a decision whether to be kept alive by extraordinary measures or ... be permitted to die.

BRIAN

Are you telling me that Ted wants me to decide whether or not to pull the plug?

MELANIE

I tried to talk him out of it.

BRIAN

And how long have you known about this?

MELANIE

It doesn't matter how long.

BRIAN

Yeah, it does. I'm this secret you two have been sharing. When were you planning on telling me?

MELANIE

I was hoping I wouldn't have to. That the situation would never arise.

BRIAN

Well, it has! It's arisen now.

MELANIE

And now you know.

CUT TO: INT. ST. JAMES ACADEMY - DAY

Equipment room. Chris is sitting on a mat. He catches the Pepsi Justin tosses at him. He pops it open and it foams out. Still standing, Justin watches. Chris takes a drink, shaking his hand of the foam. Justin is quiet. Chris offers him a drink. Their hands touch as they trade off and time slows. We see the red Babylon stamp on the back of Justin's right hand. The camera pans down, signaling a time jump, and Justin is sitting beside Chris.

CHRIS

Suzanne Shepley, big wh*re. She'll blow you, but she won't f*ck if you're in this school. Only if you go somewhere else, preferably Catholic.

JUSTIN

She seemed like a d*ke to me.

CHRIS

Oh, man, she's not a d*ke. She's a wh*re. There's a difference.

They laugh. Long pause as Chris looks at Justin's profile.

CHRIS

So you know Mary Francis Cottallutto? So, she comes over to interview me for the school paper about being this great athlete and sh*t. And it's four o'clock and my mom won't be home till six. So I tell her what a touchdown is like, and she grabs my d*ck.

JUSTIN

No!

CHRIS

Oh, yeah, she went for it. Not only that, she unzips my fly.

He slides his leg down and starts to rub himself, eyes closed. Justin swallows as he watches.

CHRIS

She's got my d*ck and she's got all these rings on. They're cold, but her hand's warm. She's rubbing ... and rubbing. Oh, yeah. And then she's gotta go home. You know, and I'm there. And I'm...

JUSTIN

You're hard.

Chris says nothing, eyes still closed. Justin reaches over and rubs Chris's c*ck. Then he unzips and slides his hand inside to slowly jerk him off. Chris pants and moans. Justin grins and goes faster. After Chris comes, Justin's smile fades and he pulls his hand away. In that instant, the door opens.

CHRIS

sh*t.

He zips his pants without Mr. Horner seeing as he walks in.

MR. HORNER

Shouldn't you be working?

CHRIS

I, uh, I am working, Mr. Horner.

He quickly gets up. Justin grins.

CUT TO: INT. WORLD GYM - DAY

Steam room with towel-clad men. We follow NAKED GUY to find Emmett and Michael lounging in the corner.

NAKED GUY #1

Hey, guys.

NAKED GUY #2

Hey.

Emmett watches Naked Guy pass.

EMMETT

How come I can't get my gluts to look like that?

MICHAEL

Maybe you're not properly visualizing the muscle group.

EMMETT

Oh, I'm visualizing it all right. On my face.

They laugh. Brian appears and takes the seat in front of them.

BRIAN

Why me? Why not his mother? [to Emmett] Why not you?

EMMETT

Because I can't decide what to wear in the morning. Who, in their right mind, would give me power of life and death?

MICHAEL

I couldn't do it, either.

BRIAN

I don't even like Ted.

MICHAEL

Oh, come on. You do so.

BRIAN

Well, not enough to be responsible for his f*cking life.

EMMETT

Well, he must have wanted you for a reason.

MICHAEL

Maybe he's secretly in love with you.

BRIAN

I love you. I'm comatose. k*ll me.

MICHAEL

It's not over yet, Brian. He could still wake up.

Brian looks at him.

CUT TO: INT. JUSTIN'S ROOM - DAY

Justin (in casual clothes) and Daphne (in her school uniform) are laying on the bed with the stereo playing.

DAPHNE

Chris?

She laughs.

DAPHNE

No way!

Grinning, Justin makes a jerking off gesture.

JUSTIN

Then don't believe me.

DAPHNE

But I thought you were in love with that Brian guy.

JUSTIN

Me and Chris? That's not love, Daph. That's just f*cking.

She laughs.

DAPHNE

Oh, and I thought it was detention.

They laugh.

JENNIFER [OS]

Justin?

Daphne sits up.

DAPHNE

Oh, I gotta go.

She gets her backpack. Justin goes to the stereo.

DAPHNE

Hi, Mrs. Taylor.

Jennifer grins.

JENNIFER

Hi, Daphne.

Daphne leaves. Jennifer looks at her watch.

JENNIFER

Didn't you have art club this afternoon?

JUSTIN

I quit art club.

Justin stops the CD playing.

JENNIFER

You love art club.

JUSTIN

I'm not interested.

JENNIFER

Since when? Just last week--

JUSTIN

You don't know everything about me. A week's, like, a long time. Things can change in a week.

JENNIFER

Well, I thought you might like to know I'm going to Niketown, but you're probably not interested in that, either.

JUSTIN

When?

JENNIFER

Now. And you can drive.

Justin follows her out.

CUT TO: INT. LIBERTY AVENUE DINER - DAY

Michael walks in and watches Deb behind the counter, clearing dishes. She rubs her nose in a cute way and Michael smiles. Deb looks up and sees him. She grins and waves, going over to him, rubbing her nose again. Michael keeps grinning at her.

DEB

What?

MICHAEL

Just the thing you do with your hand.

He does her nose-rub twice.

MICHAEL

Like this.

Deb grins.

DEB

I do that, huh?

MICHAEL

Yeah, you do.

DEB

Well, you should know.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

They're quiet. Deb leans over, pats his hand.

DEB

People wake up from comas, sweetheart.

MICHAEL

Yeah, sure.

DEB

Your Uncle Vic. How long was he in his?

MICHAEL

Nine days?

DEB

Ten. And I thought I'd lost him. I couldn't tell your grandmother it was A*DS at the time because she couldn't have dealt with it. I wanted to hear all about the white light and the-the tunnel and-and-and did Aunt Teresa get to heaven. First words out of his mouth: 'Did I miss the Golden Globes?'

She laughs, Michael smiles. She leans forward again.

DEB

So, how is he?

MICHAEL

The same. No change. [beat] I'm gonna go back a little later. I thought I'd take something to his mom.

Deb gets emotional and comes around the counter to grab his head and kiss him. She walks back behind the counter.

MICHAEL

What was that for?

Deb dismisses it with a wave and gets a Styrofoam container off a shelf, then the lemon bars.

DEB

Turkey meatloaf. Lemon bars. They're great today.

CUT TO: EXT. RESIDENTIAL ROAD - DAY

Justin driving, Jennifer in the passenger seat.

JENNIFER

You're a good driver.

JUSTIN

Better than you.

He laughs and after a second, so does Jennifer. She touches the dashboard.

JENNIFER

Okay, slow down. This is a bit too fast.

Justin looks/points to the speedometer.

JUSTIN

This is normal. And you just said I was a good driver.

Jennifer smiles at him.

JUSTIN

What?

JENNIFER

Nothing. It's just nice. You laughed. It's been a while.

JUSTIN

You know, maybe you could get another car. Let me have this for school.

JENNIFER

Oh, just hand it over, huh? I was twenty before I had a car. I was going out with Jay McLaughlin. He could have been your father.

JUSTIN

That's stupid. I wouldn't be me.

JENNIFER

He was my first real boyfriend.

JUSTIN

I'd be totally someone else.

JENNIFER

Learned with him what a kiss really was.

Justin makes a face.

JUSTIN

Gross!

Jennifer laughs.

JUSTIN

Don't tell me. I don't want to know.

JENNIFER

Well, now you do.

Justin grins. Jennifer looks at the Babylon stamp on his hand.

JENNIFER

So, do you have a boyfriend, Justin?

Flash-cut to a shocked Justin. Long pause.

JENNIFER

You can tell me. I promise you, I won't tell your father.

JUSTIN

I don't.

JENNIFER

Then who's Brian?

Justin shoots her a shocked look. He pulls over, shuts the car off and opens the door.

JENNIFER

Justin.

He runs away.

JENNIFER

Justin!

CUT TO: INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Chapel. Michael walks in with the diner food. He clears his throat.

MICHAEL

Mrs. Schmidt?

Sitting in the front row before a cross, Mrs. Schmidt turns and smiles.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Michael.

MICHAEL

I don't mean to bug you. Uh, I brought you this. It's from my mom. I ... meatloaf and lemons bars. The lemon bars are really good.

He hands her the container.

MRS. SCHMIDT

There's, um, still no change.

Michael sits across the aisle from her.

MRS. SCHMIDT

They're watching and waiting, so ... I thought I'd take a small break.

MICHAEL

Well, I'm sure you could use one.

MRS. SCHMIDT

He mentioned a Michael. I said, um, 'Tell me the name of one special friend.' And he said, 'Well, there's a Michael.' Thank you for the food, dear. I'll, uh, stay a bit longer and then I'll go to his condo tonight.

MICHAEL

His ... condo?

MRS. SCHMIDT

Oh, for pajamas. I don't know if he even wears them, but ... if he does, he'll need them when, um...

She stands to go after palming Michael's cheek. Michael waits until she's walking away before pulling out his cell phone.

CUT TO: INT. TORSO - DAY

Emmett is folding clothes with a phone headset on.

EMMETT

Torso.

SPLIT SCREEN SHOT:

Emmett at Torso.

Michael in the chapel.

MICHAEL

It's me.

EMMETT

Oh my god, is he dead?

MICHAEL

No, but he's gonna wish he was when he finds out his mom's going to his condo tonight for pajamas.

Emmett laughs.

EMMETT

Oh, sh*t! What if she finds his porn?

MICHAEL

And his magazines. And remember his thirty-third birthday last year--

Emmett laughs.

EMMETT

When we gave him those thirty-three dildos. That was hilarious.

MICHAEL

Well, it's not so funny anymore. We gotta go there and find all thirty-three.

EMMETT

Wait!

MICHAEL

What?

EMMETT

What if he's given some as hostess gifts?

MICHAEL

Wha--?

CUT TO: INT. LINDSAY AND MELANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Lindsay, Gus in hand, goes to answer the knock on the door. It's Brian. He removes his sunglasses and comes in.

BRIAN

I don't have a lot of time.

He shuts the door and walks away.

LINDSAY

You have time to kiss your son.

She follows and hands Gus to him. Brian relaxes and kisses Gus's cheek. We hear someone coming down the stairs.

MELANIE [OS]

Hey, honey, his bath's ready.

She stops at the base of the stairs, seeing Brian. Brian hands Gus back to Lindsay.

MELANIE

Oh. Did we know he was coming?

BRIAN

No, we did not know.

MELANIE

Well, it'd be nice if you'd call first. As I said, his bath's ready, so if you want me to take him up--

Brian swings around to face Melanie, agitated.

BRIAN

I don't give a sh*t what Ted wants. I'm not doing it, do you understand?

MELANIE

I told him you'd be this way.

BRIAN

He has a mother.

MELANIE

Yeah, would you wish this on yours?

BRIAN

He has better friends.

MELANIE

Well that's for g*dd*mn sure!

Gus starts to cry.

LINDSAY

[disapproving] Melanie, would you please...

MELANIE

Look, did I barge in here at bath time? Was that me?

BRIAN

f*ck bath time and f*ck you!

MELANIE

Hey, f*ck you!

LINDSAY

Just stop it, both of you.

BRIAN

So, let's cut to the chase. Find somebody else. His mommy, or Michael or Madonna. I don't care who.

LINDSAY

But he chose you.

BRIAN

Well, he chose wrong.

MELANIE

Yeah, that's what I said to him. I said, 'Brian is not the person you want responsible for your life. He's a selfish, narcissistic little f*cking f*gg*t!' And let me tell you something, it's not because you suck c*ck, it's because you're a little f*cking coward! So go, get out, now!

Brian stares at her, then looks to Lindsay. Her expression and a helpless shake of her head says he should just go. Brian looks at Melanie again, then goes to the door. Melanie shadows him, slamming the door once he's gone. Lindsay takes a few steps closer.

LINDSAY

You had no right talking to him that way.

Melanie turns.

MELANIE

No right? Ted is lying there, on life support. He's probably never going to wake up and he is depending on Brian to show him the decency, the kindness to release him.

Lindsay closes the distance between them.

LINDSAY

That's all the more reason to be kind. After all, he's the one who has to do it. Think how hard it must be. What if it were one of us? If it was me lying there and you had to pull the plug?

Melanie shakes her head, affected.

MELANIE

I'm not sure I could.

LINDSAY

Maybe that's why you're so angry at him. Because you know if it were you, you'd be as scared and angry as he is.

They lean their foreheads together.
CUT TO: INT. BABYLON - DAY

Backroom. Brian grabs Trick #1 to kiss. The trick slides down while two more tricks join in, touching and licking Brian's body. After a minute, Brian grabs the chin of Trick #2, looks at him, then pushes him away. He shoves the other tricks away and pulls his leather jacket back up onto his shoulders and walk-stumbles a few steps. Puts on his sunglasses and goes out the back door.

CUT TO: EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DAY

Justin and Daphne stand in the driveway behind a car. Justin is smoking.

JUSTIN

She knows! My mom knows!

DAPHNE

Holy sh*t!

JUSTIN

I've got to find Brian.

DAPHNE

What for?

JUSTIN

He'll know what to do.

DAPHNE

Like he cares.

JUSTIN

He wants me!

DAPHNE

How can you tell?

JUSTIN

Because I can. I'm gonna live with him. I'm gonna be with him. You'll see. Now, please, you've got to help me.

DAPHNE

I'm grounded.

JUSTIN

[soft] Oh, f*ck.

He takes a drag off his cigarette.

DAPHNE

My mom said she'd better come home and find me reading Toni Morrison.

Justin gives her puppy eyes. Daphne sighs. Beat.

DAPHNE

Well, they don't get home until seven. And you do beat Beloved.

Justin is grinning as he throws his cigarette down. They get in the car.

CUT TO: INT. TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sound of a key in a lock. Emmett and Michael walk in. Emmett slides the coffee table lamp over a few inches.

EMMETT

That's better. I'm always telling him not everything in life needs to be centered.

Michael is in the kitchen, frantic.

MICHAEL

We can redecorate later. His mother's coming.

He opens the refrigerator.

MICHAEL

Poppers.

He tosses the vial over his shoulder to Emmett.

EMMETT

Oop!

Michael tosses more packages that Emmett catches.

MICHAEL

Cheddar. Uh, Brie.

EMMETT

I don't think there are particularly strong shame issues attached to cheese, Michael.

MICHAEL

Fine! Whatever. You check out the bedroom. I'll work out here.

EMMETT

Okay.

Emmett goes off. Michael throws things away in the kitchen, then rushes to the front room. At the TV stand, he goes through drawers of video tapes, sorting out the porn.

MICHAEL

Falcon ... Falcon... You've Got Mail. He masturbates to Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks?

A dildo comes sailing through the air, hitting him in the head.

MICHAEL

Ow!

More dildos come flying.

EMMETT

Found 'em!

Michael catches a huge one.

MICHAEL

God! Jesus, look at this one.

Emmett jumps into the room, holding another huge dildo like a sword.

EMMETT

Ha!

They start dueling.

MICHAEL

Touché!

Emmett jabs at Michael's butt.

EMMETT

In this case, tushy.

MICHAEL

Whoo!

More dueling, then Emmett stabs Michael in the chest. Making dying noises, Michael falls on the couch,

Emmett following to sit hard on his lap.

EMMETT

Dead! Right through the heart!

Emmett jumps up to head back to the bedroom.

EMMETT

All right. There's, like, a million of 'em in there. And we've gotta find them all.

Michael gets up.

MICHAEL

We must.

He rounds up the thrown dildos and porn tapes off the floor, following Emmett into the bedroom. After tossing them onto the bed, he starts going through Ted's dresser, while Emmett opens a locker. Taped to the inside of the door are about twenty pictures of Michael: candids, smiling with Ted, working at the computer, making funny faces, bare chested.

EMMETT

Michael? Come here.

Michael walks over. He goes solemn, seeing the pictures. They trade a look.

CUT TO: EXT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT

Justin repeatedly buzzing the loft's intercom. He tries the locked door.

JUSTIN

sh*t! f*ck!

He backs up into the street, screaming up at the loft.

JUSTIN

Brian! Brian!

MAN [OS]

Shut up!

Across the street, Daphne honks her car horn and leans out the window.

DAPHNE

Justin, I gotta go home.

Justin looks back at her, then up at the loft, before crossing the street.

JUSTIN

But, I-I have to find him.

DAPHNE

Well, what about the crazy lady?

JUSTIN

What crazy lady?

DAPHNE

You know, the weird one ... from the diner.

JUSTIN

You mean Debbie?

CUT TO: INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT

We pan by a guy playing pool to Michael and Emmett sitting at a table with beers.

MICHAEL

So what do you think it means?

EMMETT

I think it means he likes you.

MICHAEL

I think it means he loves me.

Emmett takes a drink.

EMMETT

Kind of flattering, in a way. He collects you the way you collect comics.

MICHAEL

It's just that ... all this time, I ... I never knew.

EMMETT

There's a lot of things we don't know about each other. Like, did you know ... I used to walk down the

street in Hazelhurst, Mississippi, and the postman would spit at me.

MICHAEL

I don't know where my father was born. Or ... even who he is.

EMMETT

I sat with my dead grandma for an hour ... and held her hand ... before I told anyone she was dead.

Michael reaches for his hand.

EMMETT

How come we never tell each other these things, huh?

He takes Michael's hand.

CUT TO: INT. DEB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Deb with a hand on her hip, having answered the door to find Justin.

DEB

Don't tell me. Brian. Am I right?

Justin nods. Deb softens.

DEB

Come on in. I'll make you a sandwich.

She walks away. Justin comes in, closing the door.

JUSTIN

Actually, I just need to know how I can--

DEB

And don't talk. I can figure it all out.

She goes to the wall phone, motioning Justin to the kitchen table.

DEB

Have a seat, honey. Right there.

She punches in a number as Justin sits.

DEB

Michael?

Justin whips his head around.

DEB

It's me. You've got male.

Justin deflates.

CUT TO: INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT

Lindsay in the loft. Brian, fresh from the shower in his robe and holding a drink, slides the door shut. He walks to the kitchen, Lindsay following.

LINDSAY

I just want you to know Melanie feels terrible about what she said.

BRIAN

Do you think I care?

Adds ice to his drink.

LINDSAY

Look, it's upsetting for all of us. But at a time like this we could try showing a little compassion. Especially for Ted. Is there any word?

BRIAN

The machines say he's still alive.

LINDSAY

Poor guy.

BRIAN

What about us? We don't have any beeps or wires with little white dots telling us we're alive, so how do we know? I guess we just take each other's word.

LINDSAY

Maybe we know from what people expect from us. I mean, take Gus. He needs me to feed him, to change him. Knowing that tells me I'm alive. So, for me, right now, it's him.

BRIAN

What about me?

Lindsay closes the distance between them.

LINDSAY

Ted needs you now. So maybe that's what tells you you're alive.

Brian exhales and looks down. Lindsay holds his face.

LINDSAY

You'll do the right thing. Whatever it is.

Her hands slide away.

BRIAN

You don't know that.

CUT TO: INT. TED'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Slow pan up the bed, a machine beeping. Brian's hand comes into view and hovers over Ted's face.

BRIAN

f*ck you. f*ck you. f*ck you. For going home with some tweaked out little twinkie and thinking you got lucky.

He leans down.

BRIAN

Did he let you eat his a*s? Did he let you suck his c*ck? Well, I hope it was worth it. And f*ck you for choosing me. I ought to let you lie here forever. How'd you like that? Can you hear me? [long pause] You know, you're not so bad looking. In fact ... you look better like this. You should die more often. Or live. So that I don't have to say yes. Yes, I'll do it. I'll give you what you want. What you need. But don't think it's for you. It's not. It's for me.

A hand on his shoulder makes Brian turn. It's Male Nurse. They face each other for a second, then start kissing and stripping. Male Nurse lays on an empty bed. Brian pushes his pants to his ankles and jumps on top of him. Moans. The camera pans back to Ted's bed as he begins to wake up.

MALE NURSE [OS]

[whispered] Oh, yeah.

More moans and grunts. Ted moves his head, following the noise.

TED

Jesus.

CUT TO: INT. DEB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Justin eating a sandwich.

MICHAEL [OS]

This is my house. You've got your own. Go home.

JUSTIN

[mouth full] I can't.

MICHAEL

What?

JUSTIN

[mouth full, articulating] I can't. My mom knows.

Shot widens and we see Vic at the kitchen table with Justin. Deb and Michael are standing.

DEB

Well, she could go to my PFLAG group at the Center every other Tuesday. I'll get her a t-shirt and a button.

MICHAEL

Ma, please!

DEB

Ma, please, what? I am proud to have a g*y son.

MICHAEL

We know!

DEB

And brother.

She encircles Vic from behind.

VIC

Thanks, sis.

He takes his pills with water.

DEB

I've always said it isn't who you love, it's how you love. Genitalia is simply God's way of accessorizing.

MICHAEL

This is not about you and the g*y Mother of the Year award. This is about Brian's one night stand.

Justin shakes his head.

JUSTIN

[mouth full] Not just one.

MICHAEL

Don't bet on it. And who here even cares?!

VIC

I do.

JUSTIN

My dad threatened to disown me. He called me a big q*eer.

VIC

He didn't hit you, did he?

MICHAEL

Oh, come on, Uncle Vic. You're not gonna listen to this sh*t!

JUSTIN

That's why I have to see Brian. He'll let me stay with him.

MICHAEL

I don't think so.

JUSTIN

Well, then ... I'll go to New York! I'll become a hustler, and I'll sell my body to gross old h*m*!

Vic leans in.

VIC

I'll give you twenty bucks.

Deb swats his head. Vic turns to her.

VIC

Save him the train fare.

JUSTIN

I'm gonna throw up. I gotta vomit.

He stands, putting more sandwich in his mouth. Deb points up.

DEB

Upstairs bathroom. The one for guests and drama queens.

Justin jogs off. Vic and Michael laugh.

DEB

It's not a joke, you know. g*y teens have a very high suicide rate.

MICHAEL

Unfortunately not this one.

He enters a number into his cell phone. Deb smacks his arm; he snorts and puts the phone to his ear.

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM

Justin walks in, looking around. He grins, seeing the corkboard with the picture of Brian and Michael as teenagers. He reaches for it.

INT. KITCHEN

Deb at the sink, Michael and Vic eating sandwiches at the table.

DEB

I'm calling his mother.

MICHAEL

It's none of our business.

DEB

He may be telling the truth, and even if he isn't, she's got to be worried.

VIC

She's not worried. Now she knows. It's not drugs. It's not booze. He didn't buy an automatic weapon to take down to the Spanish club. It's just c*ck.

Amused, Deb turns, hand on hip. Vic laughs.

Sound of the front door closing.

BRIAN [OS]

Hi.

He walks in.

BRIAN

[to Deb] How did he find you?

Deb throws her hands up. Brian walks over to grip Vic's shoulder in greeting.

MICHAEL

They all find her. And now he won't leave. You gotta do something.

BRIAN

Like what?

MICHAEL

Like get him out of my house! He's upstairs.

Brian frowns and turns.

BRIAN

All right. I'm going.

MICHAEL

This is not how I wanted to spend my evening.

Brian stops and grins back at them.

BRIAN

By the way ... Ted woke up. He's going to be okay.

Brian runs up the stairs. Everyone is relieved at the news. Deb crosses herself.

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM

Justin looking down at the photo. He hears the door open behind him and smiles to himself before turning to face Brian.

BRIAN

What are you doing here?

JUSTIN

Waiting for you.

INT. KITCHEN

Michael, Deb, and Vic at the table.

DEB

Well, it's a relief. I'll say that. I like Ted. There's a real sweetheart in there, somewhere.

Michael is staring into space.

DEB

Michael?

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM

Twice, Justin tries to go in for a kiss. Brian dodges the first time, pushes Justin's chest back the second time. When Justin stands still is when Brian finally pulls him in for a couple kisses.

INT. KITCHEN

Michael looks up at the ceiling.

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM

One more kiss and Justin goes to his knees. Unbuttons Brian's jeans, then rises for more kisses. Brian whips Justin's shirt off. More kissing. Justin sinks downward and Brian's eyes close as Justin blows him.

INT. KITCHEN

Deb stands, taking her coffee cup to the sink.

DEB

I've decided.

MICHAEL

What?

DEB

You and me. We're taking him home.

MICHAEL

Why you and me? Wh-why me at all?

DEB

Well, he can hardly go with Brian.

VIC

And if I go it looks a little ... Fagin and Oliver Twist.

MICHAEL

Leaving me, huh? The harmless one. Thanks a lot.

Deb swats him with her dish towel.

Justin and Brian come down the stairs and into the kitchen. Justin grins smugly at Michael and steals some chips off his plate. Agitated, Michael stands and moves to the far wall behind Brian.

DEB

I'm calling your mother. I'm taking you home.

JUSTIN

I'm not going.

Deb points a finger in his face.

DEB

You get my t*ts in a knot, Sunshine, and you're gonna be in deep sh*t.

A hand to his chest and a grin moves him out of the way.

DEB

'Scuse me.

She goes to call Jennifer. Justin sits at the table, drinks some milk.

VIC

What are you studying in school?

JUSTIN

Hmm?

VIC

Called conversation.

Brian chuckles. He catches Michael's pissed off look and goes solemn, glancing down. Deb appears with her coat on.

DEB

Ready?

MICHAEL

I need to talk to Brian. I'll be there in a second.

Deb makes a 'come on' finger gesture to Justin, then turns toward the door. Justin follows.

JUSTIN

[mouths to Brian] Bye.

Vic gets up and leaves. Michael watches everyone leave, then faces Brian.

MICHAEL

Do you have anything to say?

Pause.

BRIAN

No.

MICHAEL

Well, I do. You can f*ck him at your place, you can f*ck him in his gym class, you can f*ck him at the zoo, but you cannot f*ck him in my mother's house. In my room!

Brian is silent.

DEB [OS]

We're waaaiting!

Michael looks over at the front door, then back to Brian.

MICHAEL

Okay, I'm gonna go do this little job, and then I'm going to go see Ted at the hospital. You do whatever the f*ck you want.

CUT TO: EXT. CITY ROAD - NIGHT

Michael is driving. He looks in the rear view mirror at a smugly grinning Justin.

DEB [OS]

Nobody knows if it's nature or nurture, being g*y.

We see her in the passenger seat.

DEB

Now they're all saying you can tell by the length of the index finger. Although, all of Michael's fingers are perfectly normal. He should have three kids and a beer belly and he's about as g*y as you get!

Justin laughs.

MICHAEL

Ma, give it a rest!

Deb pouts. Justin grins.

CUT TO: EXT. JUSTIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Deb and Michael walk up to the door. Justin lags around the corner by the garage. Deb rings the doorbell; it's melodic. She grins.

DEB

Listen! That's nice, huh? Not like that old buzzer at our house.

Jennifer answers the door.

DEB

Oh, hi. Um ... I was admiring your chimes. You have a ... real nice place here.

JENNIFER

Well, thank you. Uh, you-you must be--

Justin barges between them and into the house.

DEB

Rude little sh*t, isn't he?

Jennifer stands with her hand over her heart, composing herself.

DEB

Um, I'm Debbie Novotny ... and this is my g*y son, Michael.

MICHAEL

[out of the corner of his mouth] Ma!

Pause as Jennifer stares at Michael before shaking Deb's hand.

JENNIFER

I-I'm Jennifer Taylor.

Deb grins.

DEB

Jennifer.

CRAIG [OS]

Honey, who's there?

JENNIFER

[calls back] It's no one!

Michael and Deb look down. Jennifer comes further outside, pulling the door closer behind herself to hide them.

DEB

Uh, listen, uh ... if you ever need to talk to somebody, I work over at the Liberty Diner on Liberty Avenue. 'Cause I know what you're going through. The finding out. I mean, I always knew about Michael. In fact, I told him, right?

She laughs, touching Michael, who's itching his ear and giving her a 'Ma!' look.

DEB

To spare him the pain of having to tell me. So ... Jennifer ... don't ask, 'Are you?' Because it's never a question. Just say, 'I know.'

JENNIFER

Uh, thank you.

Jennifer gestures inside and leaves. Michael turns to Deb as the door closes.

MICHAEL

You had to say all that?!

DEB

I was trying to help.

MICHAEL

You try too much.

They turn and walk back down the driveway. Deb zips her coat up.

MICHAEL

You're still wearing that same old coat.

DEB

So, someday you'll buy me a mink. You're going to be a big success.

MICHAEL

Yeah, right. You'll freeze to death first.

Deb swats his head.

MICHAEL

What was that for?!

DEB

You can be such an as*h*le!

MICHAEL

What'd I do?!

DEB

You don't know yourself. 'Know thyself.' Some Greek said that. Who was it?

MICHAEL

Zorba?

DEB

I don't know.

She glances back at the house.

DEB

I don't know anything. Now take me home.

CUT TO: INT. TED'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Seated, Mrs. Schmidt watches Ted pack his bag.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Are you sure I can't help?

TED

I can do it. It's no big deal.

MRS. SCHMIDT

I wish you'd let me drive you home.

TED

I already asked my friends.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Michael, Emmett, Brian.

Ted looks up, surprised. He nods.

MRS. SCHMIDT

I met them while you were asleep.

TED

Oh.

MRS. SCHMIDT

They're very nice. Especially Michael.

TED

Yeah, Michael is ... especially special.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Are you two ... I mean...

TED

Oh, no. No. We, uh ... he's just a friend.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Well, he's a very good friend. He was very kind to me. I'm grateful you have him.

TED

Yeah, so am I.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Because, more than anything, I worry that you're alone. And that there's no one to look after you.

TED

I can take care of myself.

MRS. SCHMIDT

Oh, I know you can. You've always been self-sufficient. I just ... I wish you had someone to love you. I mean, if you did, maybe this wouldn't have happened.

TED

Mom, please. Let's, uh...

MRS. SCHMIDT

I'm sorry. I know that it embarrasses you if I talk too much or ... I get too emotional. But I can't help thinking that ... if you hadn't woken up ... then I would never have gotten the chance to let you know how proud I am that you're my son. And that .. and it doesn't matter to me what you are. Yeah, I got over that a long time ago. And that whenever you're feeling alone ... or that no one loves you ... that's not true ... because I do.

They're both near tears.

TED

Th-thank you ... mom, for, uh, for saying that.

CUT TO: INT. TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

Brian, Michael, Emmett and Ted walk in. Brian and Emmett are carrying paper bags of groceries and go to the kitchen. The wall clock says 11:30 a.m.

EMMETT

Now say it three times and click your heals: There's no place like home.

TED

You know, you guys really didn't have to do this. All the flowers and the groceries.

Brian and Emmett are unloading the bags. Michael holds his arms out.

MICHAEL

One stop shopping at the Big Q Mart.

TED

Oh, that's-that's nice.

He eyes the coffee table lamp Emmett moved earlier and slides it back where it began.

TED

Only, can somebody tell me why I had to stay there three days after I woke up.

EMMETT

They wanted to make sure you're still alive.

BRIAN

On your best days it's ... hard to tell.

Michael walks over to Ted.

MICHAEL

Okay, just so you don't freak out ... your dildos are missing. And your porn. We had to move it all ... in case your mom found it.

TED

Well, I expect all thirty-three back. [to Emmett and Brian] Cleaned.

Emmett laughs.

EMMETT

You should eat something, honey.

TED

I'm not hungry.

He walks toward the bedroom.

MICHAEL

We bought you a whole f*cking chicken.

BRIAN

And you're gonna eat it.

In his bedroom, Ted looks around. Michael follows him.

EMMETT [OS]

Oh my god, look at this. Who-who keeps lube in their-in their front kitchen cabinet?

Ted notices Michael.

TED

It always looks so much smaller.

MICHAEL

What does?

TED

Your life. Especially after returning from a near-death experience.

MICHAEL

Like watching the Oscars. 'Immediately proceeded by...'

MICHAEL AND TED

'The Barbara Walters Special.'

They chuckle.

TED

I'm glad you're here.

MICHAEL

You are? Well, uh ... I, um...

TED

What?

MICHAEL

Um ... uh ... I'm glad you're here, too. And if you ever wanna talk about this or ... other stuff...

TED

'Other stuff?'

MICHAEL

You know, there's--oh, you know, there's something you can't talk about...

TED

Like what?

MICHAEL

I don't know. You know, maybe if you talk about it, it might help it? But, you know, you might not get what you want. But ... Oh, sh*t.

Ted's confused. Brian pokes his head in.

BRIAN

Are you going to come eat the chicken?

MICHAEL

I'm going to arrange the daisies.

He leaves. Brian starts to follow when Ted speaks.

TED

I saw you. f*cking.

Brian frowns and comes in the room.

TED

When I woke up. I thought ... I'm in hell. And this is my punishment--watching Brian Kinney f*cking for all eternity.

Brian puts his arm around Ted's shoulder.

BRIAN

You should be so lucky.

Ted smirks. Brian slides his arm away and steps back, serious.

BRIAN

Why me? Why did you choose me?

He sits on the bed. Ted shrugs.

TED

My mother couldn't do it. Michael and Emmett ... couldn't do it. But ... you could. Because you're a heartless sh*t. You could pull the plug and you wouldn't cry. And you'd know when it's time to go.

He gently swats Brian's cheek as he walks away. Brian remains on the bed, gutted.

CUT TO: INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

Brian and Michael are dancing, having a good time.

BRIAN

I want it to be you.

MICHAEL

What?

BRIAN

I want it to be you. I'll put it in writing.

MICHAEL

I want it to be you, too. You pull my plug.

BRIAN

And you pull mine.

FADE TO BLACK.

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